

Journalist testifies in Kennedy probe

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WASHINGTON (AP) — A Dutch journalist said he testified under oath Friday that a Russian emigrant who apparently committed suicide earlier this week had claimed to be part of a conspiracy to kill President John F. Kennedy.

The television newsman, Willem Oltmans, said George de Mohrenschildt told him the alleged conspiracy involved Texas oilmen, Cuban exiles, and CIA and FBI agents.

Oltmans said de Mohrenschildt claimed he was a middleman between H. L. Hunt representing Texas oilmen and Lee Harvey Oswald. The journalist said he gave the committee "the name of an FBI official, not Hoover, who might be important."

The Warren Commission that investigated Kennedy's 1963 assassination concluded Oswald was the lone assassin.

The journalist said de Mohrenschildt told him Cubans had fired at Kennedy at the same time Oswald did, adding he gave the House assassinations committee the name and picture of one Cuban he believes is involved.

Oltmans, who testified for more than three hours before a closed session of the House panel investigating the Kennedy assassination, later declined to tell reporters what evidence he had to support his claim.

He said he gave the committee a taped interview in which a Cuban exile named

Loran Hall claims he was offered \$50,000 in the office of oilman Lester Logue to kill Kennedy.

In Dallas, Logue called that allegation "ridiculous" and said he would meet with his lawyers to discuss suing Oltmans for libel.

Logue called Oltmans a "publicity psychopath" and said "this just demonstrates the absolute power that the media has to destroy somebody without recourse."

A spokesman for the Hunt estate in Dallas also strongly denied Oltmans' assertions, saying that "to claim that de Mohrenschildt was a friend of H.L. Hunt is totally false."

"Records of the Hunt family bear evidence to this fact," the spokesman added. "His name never appeared on any of the records. It has been publicly reported that de Mohrenschildt had a history of mental problems. If in fact de Mohrenschildt never claimed to have had any relationship with H. L. Hunt, those claims must be viewed accordingly."

And in Des Moines, Iowa, David Belin, who was on the Warren Commission staff, said: "There's 100 pages of transcript on de Mohrenschildt and 45 on his wife. We did not find any conspiratorial evidence that de Mohrenschildt ever knew Oswald."

After Oltmans had testified, reporters

asked Chairman Richardson Preyer, D-N.C., if he believed the story.

"Ask me that question again in a few months," Preyer replied. "Mr. Oltmans was very specific on some things which can be corroborated but not as clear on others."

De Mohrenschildt apparently shot himself to death in Palm Beach, Fla., Tuesday, according to officials, just hours after a committee investigator tried to contact him.

The journalist said in at least two news interviews that de Mohrenschildt wavered between insisting the whole story was true and indicating he made it up to sell a book.

But Oltmans told reporters after his testimony that de Mohrenschildt never told him he had made the story up.

He said in one interview that he had no idea why Texas oilmen would want to assassinate Kennedy. But he said in another interview that de Mohrenschildt had made it "quite clear to me" what that motive would be. But Oltmans refused to state it.

He said the Cuban he believed was one of the Kennedy assassination gunmen had been involved in the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba.

The journalist said de Mohrenschildt told him he never knew who in fact killed Kennedy because an unspecified number of Cubans were supposed to be shooting at the same time Oswald was.

Oltmans said de Mohrenschildt mixed socially with Dallas oilmen and other wealthy people and became a friend of Hunt, a multimillionaire oilman now dead.